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## Local Government & Housing Committee

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### HB 2905

**Brief Description:** Planning for the discontinuation of discharge of vulnerable populations from state institutions into homelessness.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Miloscia, Upthegrove, White, Springer, Williams, Appleton, Kenney and Ormsby.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates a statutory scheme for the implementation of a statewide plan to ensure that persons leaving state custody, care, or supervision are provided with services for obtaining housing.
- Requires specified state agencies to collect data regarding the housing status of persons being released from the custody, care, or supervision of the state.

**Hearing Date:** 1/27/10

**Staff:** Becca Kenna-Schenk (786-7291) and Thamas Osborn (786-7129).

#### **Background:**

##### U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Discharge Coordination Policy.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) issues funds to state and local governments for homeless assistance programs. Federal law requires state and local government applicants for certain HUD homeless funds to certify that the governmental entity has in place policies and protocols to prevent the discharge of individuals into homelessness, and to report on progress in developing and implementing such protocols.

##### Individual Reentry Plans.

The Department of Corrections (DOC) is required to develop an Individual Reentry Plan (IRP) for all inmates in the DOC custody for the period of incarceration through release into the community. The plan addresses the employment, education, substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, and family reunification needs of the offender that are necessary to facilitate

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successful reintegration into the community. Prior to discharge of any offender, the DOC must complete an evaluation of the offender, and, if possible, connect the offender with existing services and resources that address the offender's needs.

#### Independent Youth Housing Program.

The Independent Youth Housing Program (Program), administered by the Department of Commerce, provides housing stipends and case management services to youth ages 18 to 23 who have exited the state dependency system.

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) collaborates with the Department of Commerce to refer dependent youth nearing the age of 18 to the Program. The DSHS also provides information to the Department of Commerce regarding the number of youth exiting the state dependency system eligible for state assistance and annually recommends strategies to the Legislature that may help reduce this number.

#### Release of Juvenile Offenders from DSHS Custody.

The DSHS is required to set a release date for each juvenile committed to its custody. Upon release from a juvenile rehabilitation facility, the DSHS may place a juvenile offender under parole supervision.

#### Release of Indigent Patients from a State Hospital.

The DSHS is the designated state mental health authority and oversees the three state mental health hospitals. State law specifies that no indigent patient may be released or discharged from involuntary treatment from a state hospital without suitable clothing and a sum of money deemed necessary for the patient's immediate welfare.

#### Regional Support Networks.

Regional support networks (RSNs) are geographic service areas established to develop local systems of care for persons with mental illnesses. RSNs consist of counties or groups of counties authorized to contract with licensed mental health service providers and deliver services directly. There are currently 13 RSNs in Washington.

### **Summary of Bill:**

#### Overview of the Act.

A new statutory scheme is established for the implementation of a statewide plan to ensure that persons leaving state custody, care, or supervision are provided with services for obtaining housing. The stated intent of the act is to:

- gather evidence to discover the nature of homelessness;
- collect adequate and appropriate data related to the housing status of persons discharged from state institutions or under ongoing care from a public institution;
- develop a certification that a statewide policy for the discharge of persons from publicly funded institutions that is in compliance with regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for jurisdictions receiving federal emergency shelter grant dollars; and
- identify strategies and resources necessary to eliminate the occurrence of any state institution discharging persons into homelessness by 2015.

### Planning Requirements.

By December 1, 2010, the DOC and DSHS must each submit a plan to the Legislature for eliminating homelessness or placement into temporary housing for individuals either being discharged from state custody or receiving ongoing care from a state agency. The plans for both agencies must:

- identify the resources and actions necessary to eliminate homelessness or placement into time-limited housing by 2015;
- include provisions for the discharge of individuals with long-term disabilities into permanent housing;
- include stakeholders the planning process; and
- contain performance measures.

### DOC Requirements.

Prior to the discharge of any offender, the DOC must record the housing status arranged for the offender. The DOC must continue to record the offender's housing status for the duration of the offender's supervision and anytime the offender's status is otherwise obtained.

### DSHS Requirements.

The DSHS must annually provide the Department of Commerce's Independent Youth Housing Program with the number of youth aging out of the state dependency system who do not have stable and affordable housing.

Prior to the release of any juvenile from custody of the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration, the DSHS must record the details of the juvenile's housing situation. The DSHS must continue to record the juvenile's housing status for the duration of his or her parole period and anytime the juvenile's status is otherwise obtained.

The DSHS must also record the housing status of indigent patients when they are discharged from state hospitals.

### Requirements for Regional Support Networks.

Regional support networks must track the housing status of patients receiving care when there is a change in the patient's housing status or, at minimum, annually.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.